



BIA reverses change in farming policies

Thanks to a coordinated effort between the Tribal Government, CRIT's farmers, the Arizona Farm Bureau and some of our elected officials, the Bureau of Indian Affairs will not be following through with a change in its policy toward irrigation on the reservation.

The change concerned how farmers on the reservation were billed for irrigation water from the BIA-run Colorado River Irrigation Project. For decades, farmers using the project for irrigation water were charged for that water twice a year, once on January 1st and once on July 1st.

This benefitted the farmers because it allowed them to make money off their early-season crops before having to pay for the rest of their annual water usage.

However, in September, the BIA issued an order to change the billing cycle so that farmers would have to pay the entire cost of water usage for the year.

This would have created a hardship for farmers who didn't have the resources to pay the cost up front.

CRIT worked with Congressman Raul Grijalva and Senators John McCain and Jon Kyl, who all wrote letters to the BIA asking them to change their policy back to the original billing schedule.

In addition, many farmers on the reservation wrote letters supporting the old system as well.

As a result of these efforts, the BIA has reverted back to the old billing policy.

The Tribal Government would like to thank all those who took the time to write letters, including Congressman Grijalva and Senators Kyl and McCain, for their support on this important issue.



This display in the tribal offices honors CRIT members who are serving our country in the military.

CRIT members serve America

More than a dozen CRIT members are serving the country in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Stationed throughout the world, CRIT members are serving in each of the branches of the military, during a time when our country is relying on them most.

These tribal members are being honored with a display in the tribal offices, showing their pictures in uniform.

The tribal members serving in the military right now include:

Oscar S. Welch, Ryan Kahmayah Tahbo, Robert Adam Robledo, Shawn A. Miller, Kristopher Lee Casares, Cheri Lyn Hines, Maynard Elmer, Randall Tha-Kave-Ahm Holt, Latonia Howard-Batchelor, Taylor Rahm Tahbo, Michael Peveler and Richard Tahbo.

Thank you to these members for your service to our country!

Tribe sues Federal gaming commission

Wants to avoid any infringement on tribal sovereignty

CRIT has filed a lawsuit in Federal Court against the National Indian Gaming Commission because it believes the agency is overstepping its bounds by attempting to regulate "Class III" gaming.

According to Tribal attorneys, under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, the Tribe is the sole regulator of "Class I" games, which is defined as traditional Indian gaming and social gaming activities.

"Class II" games, such as bingo, are regulated by both the Tribe and the National

Indian Gaming Commission, and "Class III" gaming is regulated by the Tribes and their states through the terms of their negotiated gaming compacts.

Class III gaming includes blackjack, slot machines and other table games.

In 1999, the NIGC adopted "Minimum Internal Control Standards" by which it sought to regulate aspects of both Class II and Class III gaming. In 2001, the NIGC sought to conduct an audit of the Tribes' compliance with both the Class II and Class III standards, and the Tribes objected.

"This is an important issue, and we need to

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News, information from your Tribal Government

Chairman Daniel Eddy Jr.
Vice Chairman Russell Welsh
Tribal Council: Cindy Homer (Secretary),
Eldred Enas (Treasurer), Dennis Patch,
Daphne Hill-Poolaw, Ray Aspa, Sr.,
Herman "TJ" Laffoon, Valerie Welsh-Tahbo

Tribal members have history of service

Right now, many CRIT members are spread out throughout the world serving our country in the Armed Forces. They represent the continuation of a long tradition of service by Native Americans, and by members of CRIT itself. From the Navajo Code Talkers in World War II to those who served in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and other places in the world, CRIT members have served our country with distinction for decades. The Tribal Government is pleased to honor more than a dozen of those those currently serving with a display in the Tribal Offices. There are more CRIT members in the military as well. It's really the least we can do to show our support of those who bravely and selflessly serve our country. The sense of pride and service Native Americans bring to the United States military is one of the things we can be most proud of. We will all never forget the sacrifice many of our members have made in the past, and will always appreciate the service members of our tribe are providing now and in the future. To all CRIT members in the military, our continued best wishes...and our sincerest thanks.

New Year means CRIT will have new opportunities

As your Tribal Government embarks on another year, we have many goals for what we want to accomplish. We want to make sure the La Paz Lands end up the property of their rightful owners — our tribe. We will continue to work to make sure that every member of our tribe has quality housing, a true place to call home. We will strive to enhance our economic opportunities, so that more tribal members can earn a good wage. We will make sure our gaming revenues are used responsively and productively for all members. Our tribal education system will continue to do its best to prepare our children for the future, from the time they enter kindergarten to the time they graduate from college. We will work together to prepare for the future, and to celebrate our past. The Tribal Government will do everything in its power to improve health care and other critical social services. And perhaps most importantly, the Tribal Government will continue to have the primary goal of serving its members well, no matter what the task at hand. We look forward to another great year!

Your Tribal Council at work for you

EDITOR'S NOTE — Over the next few issues, the *Manataba Messenger* will profile the nine members of the CRIT Tribal Council.

Aspa: "I want to help improve the system"

Supports changes, modernization of Tribal laws and codes

Ray Aspa Sr. could be the poster child for what an active Tribal member looks like. Along with serving as the Tribe's Assistant Chief Game Warden, Aspa's involvement includes myriad committees and other activities. And it's all a part, he says, of his desire to help, and the reason why he joined the Tribal Council in January 2003. "I've always been proactive in tribal matters as far as natural resources has gone," he said. "Those were some of the issues I thought should be addressed, and I also wanted to help improve the system." Aspa serves as the Vice Chairman of the Colorado River Housing Authority, as well as on the Parks & Recreation Committee, the Resource Development Committee, and the Human Resources Committee, among others. He said that he wants to use his time on the Tribal Council as an opportunity to improve the quality of life for many tribal members. "I thought I could be a strong advocate for tribal employees and for issues such as law and order, child welfare and senior care," he said. One priority Aspa has for the council is to modernize and update some of the tribe's laws and codes. "I'd like to see changes to the law and order code," he said. "It needs to be updates in many ways to fit today's standards."

Aspa also said he's going to work to improve the tribal economy and social services.

"Another goal of mine is to explore new revenue generating projects and businesses," he said. "And I'd like to see us build a senior care facility, as well as increase youth activities and programs."

Aspa said being on the Tribal Council has been a rewarding experience for him. "I've enjoyed my time quite a bit. It's been very enlightening and a new experience," he said. "I didn't realize how much work and experiences would be involved. It also takes a lot of time and work to hear members' issues and point them in the right direction to getting them solved."

Aspa said that he encourages members to contact him if they have any questions or comments about what Tribal Government is doing for its members.

"I would tell people to be patient and allow us the time to work and improve our programs and services," he said. "If you have a concern or issue, feel free to contact me — I have an open-door policy."



Councilman Ray Aspa, Sr.

Councilwoman's focus on water and housing

Hill-Poolaw wants "reservation to prosper & people to work together"

Daphne Hill-Poolaw says that her two years on council so far have been a tremendous experience — one she might not have been ready for when she ran for council before. "I've always wanted to be on the council and always had an interest in my people," she said. "I tried to get on the council years ago, but I think I was too naive. As I've matured and seen how much the council impacts people, it's encouraged me to learn more and try again." She said that the late Councilwoman Agnes Suvilla encouraged her to try to be a councilwoman, and now that she is on council, she wants to focus on the issues. "My main goal is water and land issues," she said. "We still have land that people don't realize is ours. And I'm concerned about us losing water rights to other places and want to make sure they are protected." Hill-Poolaw serves on a number of

different committees for the tribe, including being Enrollment Director and having roles in health care, housing, human resources and resource development.

As for one of her primary responsibilities, her role as Enrollment Director, she said that changes are needed in the way the Tribe approaches the issue.

"We have Native Americans who are eligible but who have not enrolled, or have enrolled with other tribes," she said. "CRIT is the only tribe that does not allow Native Americans to relinquish their membership in other tribes and join CRIT. I think we need to change our constitution to fix this."

She said that she has learned a lot during her time on the council and has enjoyed the experience quite a bit.

"I have really enjoyed it — I really love it, as a matter of fact," she said. "It has kept me very active and taught me a lot about the needs of our people."

Along with addressing specific, important issues, Hill-Poolaw said one of her main goals on the council is to get members of the tribe to work together to solve their problems and improve their quality of life.

"As members, we really have to begin to work with one another," she said. "We have four tribes and have to come together to improve our unity. We've come a long ways and have taken some hits from outsiders, but we've really taken our stands and been strong as a tribe."



Councilwoman Hill-Poolaw

Focus on...Your Health

Learn to prevent onset of diabetes

The CRIT Health & Social Services Department is working to educate tribal members on diabetes through the CRIT Special Diabetes Project.

The goal of the project is to increase awareness and knowledge about diabetes in the tribal community, as well as to increase fitness and physical activity for tribal members so that they can avoid the disease.

The project is also emphasizing educating children on proper diet, exercise and other diabetes prevention measures.

Diabetes is a serious disease that can lead to blindness, heart disease, strokes, kidney failure, and amputations.

In 1999, approximately 450,000 deaths occurred among people with diabetes aged 25 years and older.

This figure represents about 19% of all deaths in the United States in people aged 25 years and older.

Native Americans are particularly at risk from the disease. While about 6 percent of all Americans have diabetes, about 15 percent of all Native Americans have the disease.

Tribal members are eligible to be screened for diabetes as part of the project.

Diabetes can be prevented through better diet and more physical activity. It is also important to have regular physicals and blood pressure checks to monitor the onset of

Diabetes Warning Signs

- Being at least 20 percent over what you should weigh.
- Being under 65 years of age and getting little or no exercise during a normal day.
- Women who have babies weighing more than nine pounds at birth are especially at risk.
- Having a sister, brother or parent with diabetes.

diabetes or other diseases.

The CRIT Special Diabetes Project includes information on the disease, monitoring of key health indicators, and exercise programs available for tribal members led by certified fitness instructors.

For more information on the disease or how to join the classes, call the Special Diabetes Project at (928) 669-2825.

The hours of operation for the CRIT Special Diabetes Project are 6 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Friday. PACE (Programmed Aerobic/Anaerobic Circuit Exercise) group classes are 6 a.m., 12, 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The treadmills are available for use during regular hours of operation.

Health & Social Services helps members

The CRIT Department of Health and Social Services offers a variety of key services to help Tribal members and people from throughout the community.

“We want people to access and use our programs as much as possible,” said Thornton Coochyouma, Director of the department.

- Some of the services offered include:
- Behavioral health
 - Alcohol and substance abuse counseling
 - Social services
 - Child protective services
 - Community health
 - The Mo-Chem-Ho-Na Senior Center
 - Women, Infants and Children services
 - Food distribution
 - The special Diabetes project
 - Injury prevention project
 - Tobacco education

Coochyouma said that all of the programs are helpful to tribal members, but members in need are encouraged to use several programs in particular that have been underutilized.

One program the department is focusing on is the foster parent program. While there are a number of qualified foster families in the Parker area, only one Tribal family is licensed.

“We have only one family right now that’s a CRIT family, and we’d like to see more,” he said.

Coochyouma also said he would like to see more CRIT members take advantage of the Tribe’s federally funded Women, Infants and Children program, which promotes proper health and nutrition throughout the childbirth spectrum.

And, he said the Mo-Chem-Ho-Na Senior Center has been very beneficial to many members, but could be used by more seniors.

News from CRIT Dental

The CRIT Dental Clinic has several news items and tips for Tribal members.

- The clinic is now offering tooth bleaching to improve the cosmetic appearance of your teeth. For information or to schedule an appointment for tooth bleaching, call the clinic at (928) 669-3154.

- Dr. Heather Judd has been named the new Dental Director. She has been working at St. Regis Mohawk Health Services in New York for the past 12 years. Additionally, Dr. Mona Chamy and Dr. Lewis Howell each have joined the staff part-time. Both also work in San Carlos.

- In order to provide better service, the clinic will no longer have scheduled emergency times. Emergencies instead will be worked in as they happen. Also, appointments will no longer be mailed out. They can be scheduled in the clinic or by calling the clinic.

- Finally, a flu-season tip: If you’ve been sick, it’s important to throw away your toothbrush when you are well. Toothbrushes can carry germs that can re-infect those who have been sick.

The center provides meals for the elderly, both at the center and delivered to homes, and also organizes trips and social events.

“It’s also a chance for seniors to see one another and participate in activities,” Coochyouma said.

For more information on the programs and services provided by Health and Social Services, call (928) 669-6577.

Upcoming Events

Entertainment coming to Blue Water Resort & Casino

Here’s a summary of some of the events and activities coming to the Blue Water Resort & Casino.

- On February 7, the Blue Water Resort & Casino will host the Parker “425” off-road race. The Blue Water Resort & Casino Parker “425” will be a high caliber gathering of the off-road racing’s best, to the test their off-road racing skills against the unforeseen challenges the Arizona terrain has to offer. It begins on Thursday February 5th, with a “Time Trail” event, which determines starting positions. For more information, contact Best in the Desert at (702) 457-5775.

- Roy Clark will be in concert in the Bingo Concert Hall with two shows on Valentine’s Day, February 14.

The first show will be at 6:30 p.m., and the second show at 9 p.m. Ticket prices are \$25 in advance and \$30 the day of show. Tickets can be purchased at the Gift Shop.

- The following are the groups that will be performing in the Dig Lounge in the months of February & March, Tuesday thru Sunday from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.

- Feb. 3-8 BALLROOM BLITZ
- Feb. 10-15 JOHN ENCINO & THE FULL HOUSE BAND
- Feb. 17-22 SUITE 33
- Feb. 24-29 LIVIN' ON THE LEDGE
- March 2-7 SMALL FORTUNE
- March 9-14 METRO
- March 16-21 DNA
- March 23-28 BRUCE CONTE BAND

- On March 13 & 14, the Parker Ski Marathon returns to Blue Water. Skiers from all over the country will be here to race in this Ski Marathon. They will start at Blue Water and ski up river to La Paz County Park and back.

For more information contact Ron Swanson at (310) 322-9404, e-mail Rswanson@SShowr.com; or Gary Heinbuch at 909-244-2475, e=mail gary@heinbuchgolf.com.

CRIT Library continues programs

- The CRIT Library has changed the hours and days it offers tutoring for students. The new days and hours are Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call the Library.

- The Library will be offering “Computers at Night,” a series of workshops beginning in late January. The first series will focus on Microsoft PowerPoint 2000. These classes will be offered from 6 to 8 p.m. on the following dates:

- February 2, PowerPoint Fundamentals.
 - February 3, PowerPoint Advanced
 - February 4, PowerPoint Advanced+
- The Library also continues to offer other computer classes and workshops. For more information, contact Gilford Harper at (928) 669-1332.

- Finally, the Library will offer a Computer Intersession Camp for students in grades 4-6 who are on spring break. The program will cover a variety of computer programs and topics.

The sessions will be held from March 15-18, from 10 a.m. to noon and from 3-5 p.m. The sessions are open countywide, and are free. The registration deadline for the classes is March 12th.

For more information, contact Gilford Harper at (928) 669-1332.

Manataba Messenger Interviews...

Grijalva puts tribal issues at forefront

CRIT and Parker’s congressional representative is a lifelong resident of Arizona and has a long-standing commitment to community and public service.

Raúl M. Grijalva was sworn in as the first congressman for the newly created 7th Congressional District in January 2003. He is serving his first term in Congress, and his district stretches throughout southwestern Arizona, all the way from Nogales up to the CRIT reservation.

Grijalva was born in Tucson in 1948. His father was a bracero who emigrated from Mexico in 1945 to help offset the loss of skilled American ranch hands serving in World War II.



Congressman Raul Grijalva

His parents stressed the importance of education to their three children, and it was that encouragement that led him to his career into life-long public service.

Grijalva and his wife Ramona have been married for over

30 years and they have three daughters; Raquel, Adelita, and Marisa Grijalva. His family has lived and worked in District 7 their entire lives.

The *Manataba Messenger* caught up with Grijalva recently and asked him several questions about his work, his representation of the Tribes and his goals in Congress.

Q: You have been in Congress just over a year — how do you like it?

A: My first year in Congress has been a learning experience. I enjoy the opportunity to represent a diverse community.

Q: Is it what you expected?

A: It is everything I expected and nothing I expected.

Q: What committees do you serve on?

A: I serve on the Committee on Education and Workforce, with seats on the Education Reform subcommittee and the Employer-Employee Relations subcommittee, and the Committee on Resources, with seats on the National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands subcommittee and the Water and Power subcommittee. In addition, I am also the chair of the House Democratic Environmental Task Force.

Q: You were instrumental in introducing legislation to restore the La Paz Lands to the Tribe. What prompted you to lead the effort?

A: I felt that these lands needed to be returned to the Colorado River Indian Tribes. A terrible injustice had been done and I hope that this act will help in the Tribe for the future.

Q: In the year you have served, is there one particular moment or piece of legislation that

Local radio personality says people are area’s biggest asset

Ever wondered about the person behind the voice you hear on the radio?

Manataba Messenger interviewed David Bell, who provides the Parker area with much of its local news on KZUL, KADD, KRRK, KRCY, KJJJ and KNTR. Here’s what he had to say about the important issues to the region and why he loves what he does and where he does it:

Q: How long have you worked in the area?

A: I moved to the area from Chicago 10 years ago, and began working in local news in 1996 as a free lancer for the *Today’s News-Herald* (going on staff in 1998), then making the jump to News Director for Murphy Broadcasting in 2000.

Q: Where in the area do you live, and what do you like about it?

A: I live in Lake Havasu City and I love the big skies, the blue lake and the terrific school system. But because my News Department covers everywhere from Blythe, Calif. to Searchlight, Nev. and from Needles, Calif. to Peach Springs, Ariz. I like to think of the whole Tri-State area as home. And I like the diversity of all the communities.



David Bell

Q: What do you see as the biggest issues facing CRIT and the Colorado River area as a whole?

A: For both the Tribes and non-Tribal communities I see elevating the standard of living as the biggest issue. Whether it’s through increases in tourism (including cultural tourism — where I see the Tribes able to make great strides) or by bringing in industry, economic development should be the top priority. The other issue is working together, whether it’s in economic development or just in communication. Once communities learn that their neighbors aren’t their enemies or competition (more like complition — complimenting

competition), I see the area progressing.

Q: Why did you get into broadcasting and journalism?

A: I was a communications major in college, spending all my time on a stage, in a TV studio or behind a microphone. I spent a few years being a very successful failed actor in the Chicago area, then took about seven years off and went into the mortgage industry while I started my family. Once I moved here, I was able to go back to what I like doing.

Q: What would you tell young people who are also interested in broadcasting and journalism?

A: Just do it. It doesn’t matter how much experience you have, there’s somebody willing to give you a chance. Also, you have 100 bad news articles/radio or TV broadcasts in you, and the only way to get rid of them and get to the good ones is to keep doing it.

Q: What do you do in your spare time?

A: I think my family would say “what spare time?” If I’m not at work, I can usually be found shuttling my kids between activities, or taking part in events with a few service organizations I belong to. But when I have some time I like to read non-fiction and watch film comedies. Also my sons and I are big toy and comic collectors.

Q: What do you think is the best-kept secret about the Colorado River area?

A: That the people here are among the friendliest in the nation. I think we along the river have a reputation as a party destination (deservedly so) but we’re also pretty responsible and caring, especially about those in need.

I don’t think I have ever encountered as much generosity as I’ve been privileged to be involved with here.

Q: Any other comments for CRIT members and readers?

A: As someone that speaks for a living, it shouldn’t be a surprise that I think communication is the key for all of the communities along the river to grow. There is tremendous strength in the diversity that can be found here, and if each group can put aside their differences, there is massive potential for success.

Thank you for the opportunity to talk with your readers. If anyone has questions or ideas for news coverage, I encourage them to give me a call at (928) 855.1117 or email me at dbell@maddog.net.

“I felt that (the La Paz Lands) needed to be returned to the Colorado River Indian Tribes. A terrible injustice had been done and I hope that this act will help in the Tribe for the future.”

— Raul Grijalva, U.S. Congressman for District 7

stands out as your proudest accomplishment?

A: Overall, the accomplishment that stands out the most to me is the fact that I can represent the people of District 7 and advocate what is right and necessary for them.

Q: The 7th district is the 2nd largest district in Arizona — how do you keep up on all the different issues?

A: I have a great staff who keeps me very well informed on the issues that face my district. I also visit many parts of the district personally and deal with people directly.

Q: Are there any issues or legislation that

will be coming up in the next Congressional Session that will affect Native American Tribes?

A: Issues like health care, education and sovereignty will always be issues that must be confronted.

Q: If a tribal member would like to contact you, what should they do?

A: If they want to contact me by phone, please call either my Washington, D.C. office at (202) 225-2435 or my Tucson Office at (520) 622-6788. If by email, go to www.house.gov/grijalva and click on the Contact Us link.

ED&T prepares members for future



Arlinda Setoyant makes use of some of the computer programs and equipment in the Employment Development and Training Department.

Helps members develop important career skills, find opportunities

If you want to develop new skills that will help you do your job better — or even find a new job — CRIT has a program that can help.

The Employment Development and Training Department has a number of programs to help train tribal members in a variety of important skills.

The department provides everything from GED training to distance learning partnerships with universities to basic computer training.

The department’s goal is to enable members (and people from throughout La Paz County) to gain the skills they need to find better jobs and be happier and more productive in the workplace.

“Our main goal is to get employment for tribal members and to help them be competitive and advance in their jobs,” said Don Eddy, Director of the department.

Computers play a big role in all the

department’s programs, but members should not be concerned if their computer skills are not up to speed.

“All of our programs are computerized, and we also offer basic to advanced computer training,” Eddy said.

Many of the programs are state or federally funded. Additionally, distance learning programs from Northern Arizona University and other colleges provide a wide spectrum of learning opportunities for members.

The ED&T staff was recently recognized at a statewide conference for its beneficial work on behalf of members.

Eddy was recognized for 15 years of services with the department, and staffers Kim Booth and Margaret Poole were also recognized at the conference. Poole was recognized as Outstanding Case Worker of the Year in Arizona for her work with tribal members. The department has also been recognized at national conferences.

For more information on the department’s programs, call (928) 669-8555.

CRIT BRIEFS

News from around the Reservation

Career Development helps tribe fund educational opportunities

By the CRIT Career Development Office

The Career Development Office, including Valerie Welsh-Tahbo, Specialist; Olivia Barley, Administrative Assistant; and Stephanie Enas, Clerical Support, administers paperwork and funding for Higher Education (post high school), Adult Vocational Training, and Boarding School.

The Higher Education program is designed for students who are pursuing an Associates, Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate degree from an accredited junior college or university. Tribal members can apply for funding for any of these types of programs, full- or part-time.

The application paperwork consists of:

- Higher Education application
- Privacy Act Statement
- Official Transcripts from most recent school attended, must have a 2.00 cumulative Grade Point Average.
- Acceptance letter
- Copy of Student Aid Report (SAR)
- Financial Aid Needs Analysis
- Certificate of Indian Blood (for more information, contact the Enrollment Office at 928-669-1240)
- Contract Health Certification (on-reservation residents)

The Adult Vocational Training (AVT) program is designed for students who are pursuing a Certificate, Diploma, or an Associate of Applied Science degree from an accredited junior college or a training facility, such as Dental Assistant, Medical Assistant, Computer Aided Drafting, Culinary Arts.

Interested persons will need to turn in the following paperwork:

- AVT Application (includes physical exam and immunization records)
- Official Transcripts from most recent school, must have a 2.00 cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Acceptance letter
- Copy of Student Aid Report (SAR)
- Financial Aid Needs Analysis
- Certificate of Indian Blood

The Career Development Office would like to congratulate the following graduates:

- Michael Aspa, Jr. (AIMS Community College, Associates degree in Welding)
 - Shawn Thompson (University of Arizona, Bachelors in Elementary Education)
 - Victor Shortey (North American Technical College, Electrical Program)
- For more information contact the Career Development Office at (800) 809-6207 or locally at (928) 669-5548.

Long-time tribal employees recognized for service

Congratulations to the following tribal employees on their long-standing service:

20 Consecutive Years:

- Lucille Nelson, Word Processing
- Sandra Eddy, Headstart
- Ramona Jones, Food Distribution
- Ismael Casares, CRIT Farms

25 Consecutive Years:

- David Martinez, Fish & Game
- Fernando Flores, Sr., CRIT Auto Shop

30 Consecutive Years:

- Vyonne Patch, Word Processing

Telephone program provides discounts

Native American families can qualify for telephone service from Verizon Communications for as little as \$1 a month if they meet certain eligibility requirements.

Under the Native American Lifeline (NALL) program, qualifying low-income households can receive unlimited local calling for \$1 a month.

The program aims to help more American Indian families gain access to telephone service. Currently, only 47 percent of homes on Native American reservations have telephones.

By increasing access to telecommunications services in Native American communities, the NALL program will provide residents with faster access to emergency services, better chances of finding employment and an easier way to stay in touch with family and friends who move off the reservation. To qualify for NALL, an individual must be a resident of a federally recognized reservation, and receive assistance from one of the following programs:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
 - Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
 - Head Start Programs (income eligible)
 - National School Lunch Program (eligible for free meals)
- Alternatively, applicants can also qualify for NALL if they meet the following income parameters:
- | Household size | Maximum Annual Income |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1-2 | \$19,300 |
| 3 | \$22,800 |
| Each additional person | \$4,600 |
- Call Verizon at (800) 483-4000 and ask for the Native American Lifeline service or write to: Verizon ULTS
Attn: Randy Vilensky
P.O. Box 22705
Long Beach, CA 90801-5705

Casino GM predicts more success for Blue Water

Adding more slots and continuing to book quality events are the two main goals of the Blue Water Resort & Casino’s management team.

Bill Beeson, Acting General Manager of the casino, said that the tribe is in the process of adding a few more slots to the casino and rotating out ones that are not as profitable.

Right now, the casino has 465 of its possible 475 slots, and four more “American Bandstand” machines are currently being added.

And, the casino will start dealing blackjack around mid-summer, if all goes according to plan.

“We’re operating and doing well right now,” Beeson said.

He said that winter visitors are providing most of the business at present, and as the weather warms up they’ll be replaced by people visiting to enjoy the Colorado River.

“This is the time of year we have the snowbirds in, and we’re having a good year so far,” he said.

In the meantime, Dempsey Holt, Director of Special Events and Marketing, is working to continue to bring in big-name acts to the resort and provide the best entertainment possible.

There are several big events coming up in the upcoming weeks, including the Roy Clark concerts (who is performing at Blue Water for the third time on Valentine’s Day) an offroad race and a skydiving event.

Additionally, Holt said that the resort is attracting more and more annual and return events because people enjoy staying at the facility.

Some of the big musical acts being planned for the coming months include potential concerts by Ricky Van Shelton, Creedence Clearwater Revisited and 38 Special.

Holt said that the resort’s quality of facilities and hospitality help attract big names, and the facility’s reputation in the industry is becoming



Dempsey Holt, Director of Special Events and Entertainment, and Bill Beeson, Acting General Manager, are working to ensure the continued success of the Blue Water Resort and Casino.

a good one.
“Once the word has gotten out about what we have here, it’s been easier to get great acts,” he said. “Blue Water is getting well known in the entertainment industry.”

Beeson has been Acting General Manager of the casino side since June of last year. A tribal member, he worked with the CRIT Police Department for a year and spent 22 years with the Game and Fish Department before

beginning work at Blue Water.
He worked his way up at the casino over the years until he was named Acting GM last year.
Beeson said his goals as GM are to make the casino as profitable as possible and ensure employees serve customers well.
“We want to make sure we have as professional an operation as possible, and work with the employees to make things run smoothly for them and for guests.”

Housing program assists tribal members

The Colorado River Residential Management Corporation is working to provide housing opportunities for tribal members.

Dennis Harper, Management Director of the program, said the tribe continues to get grant money from the Federal Government to help provide housing options.

Specifically, in the CRRMC program, a spectrum of housing options are provided to tribal members who are in need or qualify for the program.

The emphasis is on not only providing a roof over people’s heads, but also to teach them about the concept and benefits of home ownership, which Harper said is a fairly new one for Native Americans.

“The program is a former HUD (federal Department of Housing and Urban Development) program, and its goal is to teach the concept of home ownership and maintenance,” he said.

Right now, the CRRMC oversees 175 homes that tribal members can purchase, and 224 rental units.

Residents who become involved in the program can start at the most affordable end of the spectrum, in the rental units. Rents are fixed for the units, thanks to the grant from the Federal Government.

From there, residents are encouraged to maintain and improve the properties, and once they show they have the income and interest in actual home ownership, can transition into the home ownership properties.

Those properties are also provided by the tribe with special benefits designed to assist lower-income families. Mortgage payments are kept in a fixed price range, and residents can accumulate equity that they can use to pay for home repairs and upgrades.

The program includes financial “safety nets” in case the families encounter hardships that make it difficult to make house payments or pay for utilities.
Renters and homeowners are also provided with information on how to manage and pay for utility costs, as well as tips on how to improve their homes or where to find help.
CRRMC’s future structure and goals are currently under review by the tribe, and its programs may be enhanced or improved in the coming years.
And, for those living in the program’s housing, some changes have been made recently to increase the tribe’s ability to enforce rules and collect rent.
For more information on the Colorado River Residential Management Corporation’s programs, call (928) 669-2293.

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For more information on the Colorado River Residential Management Corporation’s programs, call (928) 669-2293.

Improvement program applications due in May

The CRIT Housing Improvement Program will be accepting applications once again this May.

The program provides resources for residents who need extensive renovations on their homes and who do not have the income to make the improvements.

The program usually repairs between one and three homes each year, depending on the amount of grant money given to the program by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Residents must apply with the CRIT Housing Improvement Program office by a May deadline (which has not been solidified as of press time).

The application process requires a number of key documents that may take some time to prepare or acquire, so it is recommended that interested parties begin the process well in advance.

Homes must be considered to be in “substandard” condition to be eligible. The decision on which home or homes will be renovated will be made by a committee made up of tribal members.

Last year, about a dozen members applied for the renovation program.

For more information on the CRIT Housing Improvement Project, call Agresta Hunter at (928) 669-1275.

JOM starts CRIT Young Marines Unit

The Johnson O’Malley Program has started the CRIT Young Marines unit.

There are currently 13 members, who have started a 13-week Boot Camp at JOM. During the Boot Camp the kids will learn Marine Corps History, military customs and courtesies, basic drill movements and physical fitness.

The 13 weeks include 26 hours of instruction, with the members having already finished 20 hours of that during their winter school break. JOM Coordinator Bruce Poolaw, CRIT Police Officer Cpl. Leif Flores and CRIT Chief Detention Officer Anthony Bear Don’t Walk are the instructors for the program.

Poolaw, a former Marine and Commander of the CRIT Young Marines, was able to acquire approximately 25 brand new sets of camouflage tops and bottoms along with approximately 25 sets of combat boots and Marine covers (hats) from Staff Sergeant Morin, a Marine Poolaw served with back in the late 1980s.

The CRIT Young Marines is not an official part of the actual Young Marines Program yet. The Young Marines Program is sponsored by the Marine Corps League, and they are be the ones who will eventually give authorization to make the CRIT branch official. JOM is sponsoring CRIT Young Marines under the JOM Program, and funds are only to be used for Native American Students.

In the next few months the students will take a land navigation course and basic first aid and sometime in March have will have a course where they can apply what they learned out in the field. They will also get a chance to have paintball wars and some other fun things planned for them in the future.

JOM is also working in conjunction with CRIT Police and its officers to implement a Police Explorers Program to complement the CRIT Young Marines program. The students will learn tribal and state laws, police functions



The members of the new CRIT Young Marines program prepare for a new learning experience.

and ride along with police officers.

Poolaw is looking for former Marines who know Marine Corps drills and who may be able to help out from time to time in teaching the youth to march. He can be reached at at (928) 669-3072. At this time applications for the program are being accepted and will be kept on file, but the program has currently reached its membership limit.

JOM launches new web site

JOM started its new website. It is loaded with information on how to obtain student services and current events in JOM programs. The web address is www.critjom.com.

Education Dept. works with Parker schools

By The CRIT Education Department

The CRIT Education Department is keeping busy with a number of different projects and new initiatives.

When the Parker School District asked the department to assist with redesigning the high school’s Native American Studies class, staff members were happy to jump in. The course is four years old, and is an overview of American and Mexican Indians.

The Department and school agreed that focusing on Tribal history and development would make things more interesting and relevant to the students.

Community members are assisting Dennis Patch and Jay Cravath as they develop a

curriculum that will be in place for years to come. Rick Chance of PHS is enthusiastic about teaching the class. The place-based approach has met with much success on other reservations. It establishes a sense of roots and helps students gain an appreciation for their

own and others’ tribal traditions.

The old line that says “History is written by the victors” does not apply to this class. The truth about European colonization is revealed, warts and all. Units in the class include: The River, First Contact, The Early Days of CRIT, Sovereignty, and CRIT Comes of Age. Units on each of the four Tribes are also included with the help of local elders. The class has a number of trips and hands-on experiences scheduled.

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Tutoring for CRIT students

The tutoring program continues in the schools. Staff members have set aside rooms to work with students with learning difficulties. A number of tribal children have been improving their skills. The department hopes to contract with an independent psychologist for special-needs students caught in the district’s bureaucracy. These children have not been helped due to school district policy and parental reasons. Hiring an expert will keep our students from falling through the cracks by getting them the tests and services they need.

The GED program is in full swing. The instructor has received the latest in materials to help tribal members get their diplomas. Educational software will be available for use in the computer lab to speed up the process.

Preserve education continues

Watch for lots of activity at the Ahakhav Preserve. The Nursery is expanding by leaps and bounds. Willow Beach, the main swimming area, is adding permanent bathrooms, armadas and other upgrades. By the way, a large herd of deer have been enjoying the new revegetation area during late afternoons.

Culture integrated into classroom

The department continues to work with the school district to integrate traditional culture into the curriculum. One program available for K-12 students, is a series of classroom activities on Tribal history and culture.

If you are interested in having this in your child’s classroom, have his or her teacher call (928) 669-8831.

CRIT BRIEFS II

News from around the Reservation

Lead testing program targets health of tribal children and families

Officials from the CRIT Environmental Protection Office have been testing children for lead poisoning as part of a new program at the CRIT Head Start facility.

The EPO is part of a program being done in conjunction with Arizona State University-West to test for lead poisoning and educate children and families on how to avoid it.

Lead poisoning can lead to attention deficit disorder in children, and eventually to neurological damage.

It can also be the cause of hyperactivity and bad behavior in some children.

Lead is sometimes found in pesticides and in paint in older houses. Children 6 years old and under have the highest risk of lead poisoning.

The program was originally pursued by EPO staff member Fred Gonzales, and is currently being overseen by Diana DeLeon, an Environmental Health Officer with the office.

The initial focus of the program was educating children and families on how to prevent lead poisoning from happening.

As part of the program, EPO staff have developed a curriculum for use in local schools designed to give teachers the tools they need to educate their students on lead poisoning.

The curriculum is the first of its kind to be developed by a tribal Environmental office and implemented on an Arizona Indian reservation.

It is designed to be culturally relevant to Native American children and families, while addressing the science and nutrition involved in maintaining proper health.

CRIT EPO staff members have also received training on how to test for pesticides and lead poisoning in children.

In cooperation with ASU-West’s American Indian Environmental Health and Sciences program, more than 180 children were tested for lead poisoning in the month of December.

The grant for the program ended in January, but the EPO hopes to test all new head start students for lead poisoning in the future.

For more information, please call the CRIT Environmental Protection Office at (928) 669-4640.

La Paz County Fair coming in March to county fairgrounds

The La Paz County Fair is once again coming to the county fairgrounds, located near the Tribal Offices in Parker, from March 11-14.

The fair will include traditional carnival events, livestock exhibitions and entertainment. CRIT and its various departments and programs are some of the the major participants in the event.

Also, a number of tribal and community organizations will have booths at the event to educate the public on different topics. For more information on the fair, please call the La Paz County Fair office at (928)669-8100.

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Now you can reach the 3,500 members of the Colorado River Indian Tribes directly.

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CRIT Tourism attracting visitors to area

CRIT’s Tourism Director is working to educate visitors about the many sights, events and attractions on the CRIT reservation.

Ron Charles is working to promote attractions such as the Blue Water Resort & Casino, the Tribal Museum, the Ahakhav Preserve and the Poston Monument to tourists locally, nationally and even internationally.

“Between the attractions and events we have on the reservation and the ones done locally and by Parker, we’re bringing in a lot of people to the area,” he said.

Charles serves on the Governor’s Tourism Advisory Council, and participated in the group’s Tribal Tourism and Economic Summit in December. The task force will be working with the Arizona Office of Tourism on efforts that should be helpful to tribal tourism in the coming months.

Charles is also planning on spreading the word about CRIT’s many natural and Native American attractions in several different ways in the coming months.

First, he is planning on attending the Res 2004 Convention in Las Vegas in early February, a convention designed to help Native Americans share ideas on how to improve Tribal business and marketing.

Charles will be speaking at the convention on the Tribe’s tourism efforts.

He is also potentially going overseas in an effort to attract more foreign visitors to the reservation. Specifically, he’s hoping to travel to Canada and to Germany in the coming months.

“The German people have a real interest in Native American culture,” he said. “I think we can attract a lot of people to the area and to our resort.”

Charles also said CRIT Tourism will be participating in several significant events on the local level this year. Those include:

- CRIT Heritage Day, to be held in March.
- 4th of July Celebration in Manataba Park.
- National Indian Days Celebration.
- The Fall Gathering, to be held in November.

For more information, call Ron Charles at (928) 669-6757.

“Between the attractions and events we have on the reservation and the ones done locally and by Parker, we’re bringing in a lot of people to the area.”
— Ron Charles
CRIT Tourism Director

GAMING,

From Page 1

make sure the regulatory agencies are obeying the letter of the law,” said Tribal Chairman Daniel Eddy, Jr. “We believe that the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act is written to make it clear that the tribes and states have the responsibility for regulation of Class III gaming, and it is important to our sovereignty to make sure the Federal Government does not overstep its bounds.”

The suit is actually an appeal from an administrative decision by the NIGC, in which

the NIGC upheld its right to impose these Class III standards on CRIT and to do an audit to measure the Tribes' compliance with them. The Tribe did not refuse to allow the audit, but asked the NIGC to identify its legal authority to look at Class III gaming. The NIGC staff and CRIT staff were unable to agree on that authority, and the audit was terminated.

The National Indian Gaming Association and a number of individual tribes filed legal briefs as friends of the court in initial NIGC hearings on the issue to support the CRIT position. CRIT hopes they will do the same in the court proceedings, which will be held in Washington D.C. in the coming months.

Call Us!

Got news? Submit your comments, questions and story ideas to Manataba Messenger:
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Thank you for reading this issue!



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